

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, on May 3, 2007, I requested and received a leave of absence from May 3 to May 9, 2007, due to my presence at previous commitments in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Improving Head Start Act of 2007 (H.R. 1429): Rollcall No. 277, the Price of Georgia Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 278, the Sestak of Pennsylvania Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 279, the Hirono of Hawaii Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 280, the Mica of Florida Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 281, the Putnam of Florida Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 282, the Carnahan of Missouri Amendment, "aye"; and rollcall No. 283, the Shuler of North Carolina Amendment, "aye".

Rollcall No. 284, on Motion to Recommit with Instructions, "no"; rollcall No. 285, on Passage, Improving Head Start Act, H.R. 1429, "aye"; rollcall No. 286, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, H. Res. 243, "aye"; rollcall No. 287, the Sullivan (OK) Amendment to Honda (CA) Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 288, the Honda of California Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 289, the Campbell of California Amendment No. 5, "no"; rollcall No. 290, the Campbell of California Amendment No. 4, "no"; and rollcall No. 291, the Garrett of New Jersey Amendment No. 11, "no."

Rollcall No. 292, the Flake of Arizona Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 293, the Matsui of California Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 294, the Price of Georgia Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 295, on Passage, National Science Foundation Authorization Act, H.R. 1867, "aye"; rollcall No. 296, on Ordering the Previous Question, H. Res. 364, "aye"; rollcall No. 297, on Agreeing to the Resolution, H. Res. 364, "aye"; and rollcall No. 298, on Motion to Recommit with Instructions, "no."

Rollcall No. 299, on Passage, To provide Federal assistance to States, local jurisdictions, and Indian tribes to prosecute hate crimes, H.R. 1592, "aye"; rollcall No. 300, on Motion to Recommit with Instructions, H.R. 1868, "no"; rollcall No. 301, on Passage, Technology Innovation and Manufacturing Stimulation Act, H.R. 1868, "aye"; rollcall No. 302, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, H.R. 407, "aye"; rollcall No. 303, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, H.R. 1025, "aye"; rollcall No. 304, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, H. Res. 371, "aye"; rollcall No. 305, on Agreeing to the Resolution, H.R. 1294, "aye"; and rollcall No. 306, on Agreeing to the Resolution, H. Res. 370, "aye".

Rollcall No. 307, on Agreeing to the Resolution, S. Con. Res. 1, "aye"; rollcall No. 308, on Motion to Instruct Conferees, S. Con. Res. 1, "no"; rollcall No. 309, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, H.R. 1595, "aye"; rollcall No. 310, on Ordering the Previous Question, H. Res. 382, "aye"; rollcall No. 311, on Agreeing to the Resolution, H. Res. 382, "aye"; rollcall No. 312, on Agreeing to the Resolution, H. Res. 383, "aye"; rollcall

No. 313, on Agreeing to the Resolution, H. Res. 383, "aye"; and rollcall No. 314, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, Student Loan, H.R. 890, "aye".

**EEOICPA OMBUDSMAN ENHANCEMENT AND EXTENSION ACT OF 2007****HON. TOM UDALL**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to introduce the EEOICPA Ombudsman Enhancement and Extension Act of 2007. I am also pleased to be joined in doing so by Representatives UDALL of Colorado, SLAUGHTER, WAMP, WHITFIELD, and HASTINGS.

This important legislation is needed to extend the authorization of the EEOICPA Ombudsman, which is set to expire on October 28th of this year. The office of the EEOICPA Ombudsman was created in 2004 to help individuals making claims under Part E of the program navigate the complex and cumbersome claims process. The EEOICPA Ombudsman has proven to be an effective ally for these Cold War heroes who have contracted serious illnesses as a result of their work for the United States Government.

Since the implementation of EEOICPA, it has become tragically apparent that the program is not working as intended. Claimants face overwhelming obstacles on their road to compensation. From a complex bureaucracy, to a highly technical burden of proof, to intimidating health physics discussions—all the while dealing with the physical and emotional strains of their illnesses—obtaining compensation for many claimants has proven to be a particularly difficult process.

With that in mind, Congress created the Office of the EEOICPA Ombudsman, an independent office tasked with providing information to claimants and advising the Department of Labor concerning additional Resource Centers. However, due to objections from the Administration, language originally included in the FY05 Senate Defense Authorization that provided broader authority for the office was scaled back in favor of the language that ultimately became law. As a result, the Ombudsman was not only scheduled for sunset, but was also prohibited from serving as an advocate for claimants. It was instead restricted to a role in which its powers are limited to making inquiries on behalf of claimants. There is no question the Ombudsman has proven to be extremely valuable even in its limited capacity, but with broader authority, the Ombudsman will be that much more effective as an advocate, helping claimants receive the compensation they deserve, which, after all, is the intention of the EEOICPA program in the first place.

Today, my colleagues and I seek to provide broader authority for the EEOICPA Ombudsman by introducing this legislation. This bill extends the life of the EEOICPA Ombudsman indefinitely, expands its authority from Part E of the program to Part B, and provides contracting authority for services necessary to ful-

fill their duties. Also, this legislation expands the powers of the EEOICPA Ombudsman to act as an advocate for the claimants when the Ombudsman determines it is appropriate. One other expansion of power in this legislation is to give the Office of the Ombudsman the authority to provide recommendations to Congress about legislative changes needed to make EEOICPA work more effectively. These are all expansions that are greatly needed to help the Ombudsman build on its already valuable role, which, in turn, helps EEOICPA claimants obtain their compensation.

I urge my colleagues to join us in support of this legislation and help improve and expand efforts to provide some measure of justice to our Cold War heroes.

**CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MR. ELISHA GRAY****HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mr. CONYERS. Madam. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a man who may be little known to the Nation, but one who is a treasure to the City of Detroit. Elisha Z. Gray, born on May 1, 1917 in Arlington, TN, right outside of Memphis, celebrated his 90th birthday last week.

At the age of 18, Mr. Gray left Arlington in search of a new life in bustling Detroit. For the next 9 years, he worked on the automobile assembly lines of the famous Packard Plant on East Grand Boulevard. On many occasions during those years, he served as a butcher in Detroit's historic Eastern Market.

It was not until 1944 when Elisha received his barbers' license from Michigan Barber College, that he evolved into his true calling. Since black subjects were not allowed at his school, his first opportunity to cut a black man's hair came in 1945 when he opened the Family Barber Shop on the corner of Hazelett and Milford. In fact, I remember my father John Conyers, Sr. being one of his loyal customers when we lived around the corner from his shop on Colfax.

The Family Barber attracted some of Detroit's most powerful and influential citizens, most of whom came from the west side of Detroit. Mr. Gray not only served his more distinguished clientele, but he was equally inviting to his everyday customers from the neighborhood. The Family Barber was the centerpiece that allowed the two worlds to intersect. His shop was also used as a training ground for other young black African-American barbers who would have their first experience cutting hair for blacks. In addition, he sponsored various athletic teams which enabled the neighborhood youth to get involved in constructive recreational activities, and encouraged them to stay off the streets and out of trouble.

I was sad to hear that Elisha sold the Family Barber in 1972, but it came as no surprise that he was already pursuing a new venture. Soon, he became a real estate agent, then a broker and soon after, he established E.Z. Gray & Sons Realtors on Puritan in Detroit. Although he has long retired from the real estate